

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3698

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 2149

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, HO, ES, GT, PN, NU, CS

SUBJECT: FACIO QUESTIONS UTILITY OF CENTRAL AMERICAN
PRESIDENTS' MEETINGS

GUATEMALA FOR ROCAP

REFS: (A) SAN SALVADOR 1775; (B) SAN JOSE 1943.

1. FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO TOLD ME APRIL 29 THAT BASED ON
SEPARATE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE HONDURAN AND SALVADOREAN FOREIGN
MINISTERS SUBSEQUENT TO PRESIDENT MOLINA'S VISIT, HE DOES NOT
BELIEVE THAT ENOUGH PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN SETTling EL
SALVADOR/HONDURAS DISPUTE TO JUSTIFY A CENTRAL AMERICAN PRESIDENT'S
MEETING IN MAY. FACIO SAID THE HONDURAN FOREIGN MINISTER
APPEARS WILLING TO REACH AN AGREEMENT, BUT APPARENTLY CANNOT
DO SO BECAUSE OF PRESS ATTACKS TO WHICH IS CONSTANTLY
SUBJECTED.

2. FACIO CONFIRMED GENERAL ACCURACY OF PRESS REPORT OF APRIL
28 IN WHICH HE WAS QUOTED AS STATING THAT THE CENTRAL AMERICAN
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PRESIDENT SHOULD NOT MEET UNTIL THERE IS CONCRETE MOVEMENT

TOWARDS PEACE AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, FACIO ALSO STATED THAT SUCH MEETINGS, IN WHICH THE PRESIDENTS OF SALVADOR AND HONDURAS MEET BUT FAIL TO AGREE ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ARE "NOT VERY FRUITFUL." IT IS NOT EVEN POSSIBLE, FACIO CONTINUED, TO DISCUSS THE DRAFT TREATY ON THE CENTRAL AMERICAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMUNITY WHILE THE TWO NATIONS ARE AT ODDS. FACIO DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THE TREATY IS "VERY REALISTIC," ALTHOUGH HE EXPRESSED COSTA RICA'S OBJECTION TO THE IDEA OF A FEDERATION OF CENTRAL AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

3. IN APRIL 29 EXCELSIOR, PRESIDENT ODUBER WAS QUOTED: "IF PENDING PROBLEMS THAT AFFECT AREA ARE NOT RESOLVED, CENTRAL AMERICAN PRESIDENTS' MEETINGS BECOME SOCIAL MEETINGS." ODUBER ALSO QUOTED: "IT IS ALWAYS GOOD TO MAINTAIN INTIMATE CONTACT AT THE PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL, BUT IT IS BETTER TO DO SO FOR PURPOSE OF SEEKING SOLUTION TO CONCRETE PROBLEMS."

4. COMMENT: FACIO'S COMMENTS REFLECTED SOME DISILLUSIONMENT AND EVEN A TINGE OF DISGUST OVER THE INABILITY OF HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES. HE CLEARLY BELIEVES THAT NOT MUCH CAN BE DONE TO FOSTER INCREASED CENTRAL AMERICAN COOPERATION UNTIL THAT DISPUTE IS SETTLED. COSTA RICA IS LIKELY TO DO WHATEVER IT CAN TO KEEP PRESSURE ON BOTH SIDES TO REACH AN AGREEMENT. TODMAN

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